HISTORY OF BEIRUT

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PORTER

THE HISTORY

OF

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BY

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IMPRIMERIE DES BELLES-LETTRES, KHALIL SARKIS, BEYROUTH

PART ONE

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BEIRUT BEFORE THE MOSLEM CONQUEST



1. Reverse Poseidon standing holding in his right hand a patira and in his left a trident. Legend in Phoenician, "Laodicea, metropolis in Canaan" and "Basileos Alexandron", (King Alexander). This is Alexander Zehina, 128-123 B. C.
2. Reverse. Dolphin entwined about a trident, bonnets of the Dioscuri, one on either side. Legend, in Greek, BE-RU-TI-ON. First century B. C.
3. Reverse Peasant plowing with oxen. Legend above COL-IVL, at right AVG, below FEL., to left BER. (Colonia Julia Augusta Felix Berytus). Reign of Augustus.

THE HISTORY OF BEIRUT

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FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE ROMAN CONQUEST, B. C. 64.

I

BEIRUT is one of the oldest cities on the Phoenician coast. Sidon and Gebal (Jebail) are probably older, but Beirût stands next, perhaps, in antiquity. As we have no reliable records of the foundation of any of these cities, we are compelled to have recourse to tradition. In the classical authors we have references to a historian of Phoenicia, said to have been a native of Beirût, Sanchoniathon by name, who has handed down

the tradition that Beirût was built by the god Il, or Illion, who was king of Gebâl. This personage married a wife named Beirût and built the city and named it after her. Though this is a fable, it indicates the belief of the ancient Phoenicians that Beirût was the daughter of Gebal and had its origin in pre-historic times.[1] We might have had something more than fables, perhaps, had the work of Sanchoniathon been preserved in its entirety, for he no doubt had records at his command that have wholly disappeared. A similiar fate has overtaken all other literary works of the Phoenicians relating to this country, leaving only the somewhat scanty monuments to furnish information of its early history.

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1. Philo of Byblus, quoted by Eusebius.

The name Beirût is certainly old, but we are in the dark as to its derivation. Some would derive it from Berothai mentioned in II Sam. VIII. 8, or from Berothah which occurs in Eze. XLVII, 16, but the other names in connection with which these two are mentioned make it improbable that Beirût is the place referred to. Others would derive it from the Hebrew word for wells, Biarôth, the Phoenician term being the same, as the two languages were much alike: This derivation would indicate that the place was noted for its wells in ancient times, a conclusion which is quite possible, since wells were numerous until the introduction of the Dog River water.

There is some doubt also as to the location of the ancient city. It was probably not on the present

site. Dr. Rouvier, who has studied the antiquities of Beirût very carefully, locates the ancient town on the south side of the cape, at a point on the old Sidon road, near the river Ghadir, where he thinks he has found an old Phoenician necropolis. The site is farther from the sea than most Phoenician towns, but we have other instances of a similar location such as that of the city of Tripoli, which was, no doubt, a seaport like Beirût. The Phoenicians often drew up their ships out of the water in winter, when navigation for the most part ceased, naturally selecting a sandy beach for this purpose. The south side of Cape Beirût offers better facilities for such beaching than the north, where the present city stands.

II

THE earliest authentic records we have of Beirût are to be found in the Tell-el-Amarna tablets, discovered in Egypt in 1886. These are letters from the governors, or princes, of various cities and districts in Palestine and Syria to the king of Egypt who had appointed them and was their suzerain. They were, for the most part, native princes who had been compelled to submit to Egyptian authority, which at that time prevailed throughout the country. In the reigns of Amenhotep III and IV the Hittites and Amorites from the north attacked the princes subject to Egypt. Matters became so desperate that the latter applied to Egypt

for help, the letters above referred to being written mostly for this purpose. They date from the early part of the 14th century B. C. Beirût is among the cities represented in this correspondence. It had its petty king like the others, but whether he was a native or not we do not know.

The letters from Beirût to the king of Egypt were written when the bands of the Amorites were attacking Gebal about 1380 B. C. The king of Gebal, a certain Rib-addi, was so hard pressed by the enemy that he wrote to the king of Egypt repeatedly for help, but none was given. In one of his letters he complains that all his territory between Gebal and Beirût had been occupied by the enemy. He indicates that Beirût belonged to his jurisdiction, which fact gives color to the tradition that

the latter was founded by Gebal. At about this same time the letters from Beirût were written. They are three in number, the first only being complete. This runs as follows.[1]

"To the king, the breath of my life; Amunira, thy servant, the dust of thy feet. At the feet of my lord, the king, seven and seven times I fall. Furthermore I have heard the words of the tablet, which my lord, the king, sent me. And upon hearing the words of the tablet of my lord, the king, my heart rejoiced and my heart shone brilliantly. Furthermore, I am keeping close guard, and am watching Beirût for my lord, the king, until the arrival of the troops of my lord, the king. Furthermore, as to the man from Gebal, who is with me, I am indeed guarding him until the king shall care for his servant. Furtherlet my lord, the king, know of the action of his brother, who is in Gebal, that he has given the sons of Rib-addi, who is with me, to the king in Amurri. Furthermore, I have truly placed myself and my

1. Winckler, Tell-el-Amarna Letters, 123-130.

horses and my chariots, together with all that I possess, at the disposition of the troops of my lord, the king. Again I fall at the feet of my lord, the king, seven and seven times."

"The man from Gebal" mentioned in this letter, was doubtless Rib-addi, who, for some reason or other, was obliged to flee to Beirût for safety, leaving his brother and family behind. Perhaps his brother had expelled him, since he seems to have proved a traitor by delivering Rib-addi's sons into the hands of the enemy. Gebal was afterwards taken and Rib-addi disappears. He was probably slain in the capture of the city. It would appear from the letter that Amunira had asked for help which was promised and he was awaiting the arrival of the troops. The second letter from Beirût is so mutilated that nothing can be made

out of it. The third also is fragmentary, but we may gather from it that Amunira was looking for ships to arrive at the port of Beirût with reinforcements, and that he was to forward the ships to some other place, probably Gebal. It is evident, however, that they did not come in time, for we learn from the letters of Rib-addi that Beirût fell into the enemy's hands before Gebal.[1] The coast region thus became wholly subject to the Amorites while the Egyptians were driven from Syria.

About one hundred years later we find the Egyptians again in Syria disputing the possession of it with the Hittites. Rameses II penetrated into North Syria and probably occupied Beirût, since we find

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1. Breasted : Hist. of Egypt, p. 333-339.

his monuments at Dog River. The first of his stelae, as such inscriptions are called, was set up in the fourth year of his reign, 1388 B. C. Some years later he set up two more, but they are, unfortunately, so badly defaced that nothing can be made out of them.

III

BEIRUT was something of a city under the Egyptian dominion, but of less importance than Gebal, upon which it seems to have been more or less dependent politically.

That Beirût was engaged in the commercial activity of the Phoenicians is undoubted, for Poseidon, the god of the sea, was its tutelary deity as appears from its coins. These latter exhibit frequently the type and symbols of this god, such as the trident and the dolphin. Other Phoenician cities paid homage to Poseidon likewise, but his emblems were not adopted as so distinctive of them as of Beirût. The mythology of the city is full of

references to this deity. On the coins he is represented driving in his chariot, drawn by four sea-horses. We also see him standing on the prow of a ship, holding the dolphin in one hand and the trident in the other. In another case he is represented as seizing the nymph Beroë with his right hand and holding the trident in his left. Others exhibit him standing on the deck of a ship with the usual emblems of Poseidon in his hands. Some coins have only the trident to represent him. These various representations of the god of the sea show us to what extent the Phoenician inhabitants of Beirût honored him. They evidently were extensively engaged in commerce and trade by sea and thought it for their interest to propitiate the god whom they supposed had control of

the waves or, otherwise, he might bring disaster upon them.

Another deity, whose cult was very common in Beirût, judging from the testimony of the coins, was Astarte, the Ashtoreth of the Bible, closely allied to the Venus of the Romans. Her temple often appears with the statue of the goddess within. Her worship would naturally be domesticated at Beirût from its close connection with Gebal, the special center of this cult. The Gebalites used to celebrate the rites of Venus and Adonis at Nahr Ibrahîm, called the Adonis River in ancient times. The famous temple of Venus at the source of this river, at Afka[1], was visited and maintained

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1. The ruins of this temple could still be seen at this place, the Apheca of the ancients, until a landslide in the spring of 1911 almost obliterated them.

chiefly by the inhabitants of Gebal and Beirût. Baal was of course worshipped at Beirût, as he was in all Phoenician cities. He was usually identified with the patron god of the place, "baal" meaning master or lord, and being the term for the chief deity. Thus he was here identified with Poseidon, while at Tyre he corresponded to Hercules, or Melkarth. The sanctuary which, we know, existed on the spot where Deir-il-Ḳalʿat now stands, was dedicated to the Baal worshipped at Beirût though he was there known as Baal-marḳod, as we learn from the inscriptions.[1] These latter are not older than Roman times, but the name is certainly not Roman and the cult dates

1. Quar. St. of Pal. Ex. Fund 1898, p. 34; Melanges de la faculte orientale de Beyrouth. Tome I, p. 161-2.

from times more remote. Marḳod is evidently Phoenician, being derived from the root "raḳad", to leap or dance, referring to the well known custom of leaping or dancing around the altar in worshipping and offering sacrifice to Baal. The custom is seen in the story of the sacrifice to Baal on mount Carmel in the days of Elijah.[1] Deir-el-Ḳalʿat is the site of one of the high places of Baal which were frequented by the inhabitants of Beirût, visited on festive occasions or for the performance of special acts of worship, like the discharge of vows.

1. I Kings 18 : 26.

IV

After the period of the Tell-el-Amarna tablets we glean little or nothing about Beirût from the ancient monuments until Roman times, but we may infer some general facts concerning its affairs from the statements relating to other Phoenician towns. As the power of Egypt declined, the dominion of the Ḥittites advanced from the north. The history of this people is obscure because their monuments have not yet been deciphered sufficiently to reveal their origin and course of development. The most we know about them comes from their enemies, especially from the monuments of Egypt. The center of

their first empire seems to have been at Boghaz-Keui, in Asia Minor, but they afterwards pushed into Syria where they were found in the days of Rameses II, of the XIX dynasty, who reigned in the latter part of the 14th century B. C. Their Syrian capital was at Kadesh, on the Orontes (Nahr-el-'Asi), a few miles to the south of the present city of Ḥumṣ. They must have held some power over the Phoenician towns, as did the Egyptians, but we know nothing, as yet, of their dealings with those cities.

Later the Assyrians appeared and established their authority over Phoenicia. We learn from the monuments that Assur-nazir-pal overran northern Syria, advancing as far as the Lebanon, and the Phoenician towns of Aradus, Gebal,

Sidon and Tyre were compelled to send him presents, or tribute. Beirût is not mentioned among the conquered towns, perhaps because at the time it was regarded as a dependency of Gebal; but it, too, must have submitted. The Assyrian left a record of this invasion on the rocks at Nahr-el-Kelb. This was in the first half of the ninth century B. C. From that time on the kings of Assyria extended their authority gradually until it embraced all western Asia. The Phoenician towns of course were included, though they were generally the last to submit as they could be succored from the sea. The coast lands were certainly overrun by the Assyrians, as the now mute tablets at Nahr-el-Kelb testify. Beirût was, of course, made subject, although not specially

mentioned, for it could not have escaped while stronger towns, like Sidon, whose subjection to Assyria is asserted, were unable successfully to defend themselves. It was probably required to pay tribute, while allowed local autonomy. The same may be affirmed of the Babylonian rule which succeeded the Assyrian at the end of the seventh century B. C. when Nebuchadnezzar subdued all Syria and Palestine, and left a long inscription at Dog River, recounting his exploits. The Babylonian dominion was overthrown by the Persians under Cambyses in 527-522 B. C., but the Phoenician cities were left with a measure of local independence, as their coins testify. We have no coins of Beirût from this period, but those of Aradus, Sidon and Tyre exist.

V

It is well known that Alexander, the Great, marched along this coast on his way to Egypt and that all the towns submitted without a contest except Tyre which he took and destroyed. After his death, in 323 B. C., the Ptolemies of Egypt took possession of Phoenicia. Beirût was of some importance under their rule as is again evident from the coins struck here by their authority. This coinage still bears the trident, the ancient symbol of the city in the days of its freedom. A little subsequent to the year 200 B. C. the Ptolemies were expelled from Phoenicia and the Seleucids took their place, remaining in possession

until the fall of their kingdom in 65 B. C.

During this period Beirût acquired some distinction by its opposition to the usurper Tryphon, who dethroned Antiochus VI. Beirût had to suffer for its loyal devotion to Antiochus. It was destroyed by Tryphon when he later got possession of it, in 149 B. C. But it did not remain long in ruins, for there exists an inscribed weight, bearing date of 128 B. C., with the name of Nikon, the agoranomos, that is, the inspector of markets for the city.[1] This being only twelve years after the destruction by Tryphon shows that it soon recovered, since the existence of such an officer as an agoranomos indicates a municipal government. The auto-

1. Al-Meshriq, Vol. 1. p. 17.

momous coins of Beirût, with dates ranging between 176 and 14 B. C., give evidence of its importance. Some of them bear the figure of Poseidon, as before described, with the legend in Phoenician which may be rendered in Arabic characters thus : للاذكا ام بكنعان. The translation is; "Laodicea, a mother in Canaan" which seems strange for a coin of Beirût, but the symbols and type are those of this city, and Dr. Rouvier[1] concludes from this that the coin really belongs to Beirût. The expression, "a mother in Canaan", means a metropolis and shows that Beirût occupied a foremost position among the cities of Phoenicia during this period.

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8. Les monnaies autonomes de Beryte par le Dr. Rouvier; (Revue numismatique, 1898 pp. 437, 640)





4. Reverse. Two legionary eagles on standards, with the numbers V.-VIII. Reign of Claudius.

5. Reverse. Poseidon with trident in left hand seizing the nymph Beroë with he right. Legend COL.-IVL.-AUG.-FEL. BER. (Reign of Elagabalus).

BEIRUT UNDER ROMAN RULE

B. C. 64 TO A. D. 633.

VI

POMPEY took possession of the kingdom of the Seleucids on behalf of Rome in 64 B.C., and spent the winter following at Damascus regulating the affairs of Syria. Beirût of course felt the change of government and was destined to attain, under the Romans, a degree of magnificence it had never before known. The full effect of Roman rule was not felt until the reign of the Emperor Augustus. He made Beirût a Roman colony and advanced it to the highest dignity among the cities of Syria. Here he settled the veterans of some of his legions who

had fought bravely for him at Actium in 31 B. C. Augustus selected Beirût as their residence, bestowing upon the city Roman rights with various privileges and adorning it with beautiful temples and other public buildings. We do not know the year when Beirût was constituted a Colony, but we learn from the coins that it had advanced to that dignity in the days of Augustus from whose reign its prosperity dates. The Emperor made Vespasianus Agrippa, who married his daughter Julia, governor of Beirût. As a consequence the city received the name of Colonia Augusta Julia Felix, numerous examples of which title appear on its coins. Agrippa was instrumental in elevating Beirût to the noble position it attained in Roman times and in making it one of the magnificent

cities of the East. He visited the city in 15 B.C. From that year until its destruction in 551 A.D., a period of 565 years, Beirût was a leading center of Roman civilization in Syria. Most of the antiquities of the city date from that period. Not only within the limits of the present town but in the suburbs also we find Roman remains, among the most noteworthy of which are those of the aqueduct in the gorge of the Beirût river. The Romans made Beirût a great commercial emporium. It became the chief port of Syria and the station of the fleet which dominated the eastern Mediterranean. The territory to some distance around was made subject to the government of the colony and the lands tributary to it are said to have included the adjacent parts of Lebanon extending

even into the Buka'.[1]

The grandeur and number of the public buildings that adorned Beirût may be inferred from the numerous granite columns scattered widely over the site of the ancient city. Many have disappeared during the last forty years but a number are still to be seen, and wherever excavations are made in the old town they are liable to be brought to light. Some are still in situ, like those near the Bauwabet-id-Dirki, and others may be seen in fragments, some of these being used for street rollers and for other purposes. Formerly a number of them were visible under water at the port,

1. This is testified to by the coins of Heliopolis (Baalbek) which indicate that portions of the same legions (V and VIII) as those stationed in Beirût were settled the also. (Eckhel Doct. Num. III 335).

now covered by the present government buildings, but some are still to be seen in the water to the east of it. They must have belonged to temples or other public buildings near the sea and were probably thrown into the water by the great earthquake that destroyed the city in 551 A. D. These granite columns must have come from far up the Nile in Egypt, as we have no granite quarries in Syria. They were brought here at great expense and their number indicates the lavish manner in which the Romans adorned their colonial municipality.

VII

AFTER Agrippa, the Roman, the Jewish kings of the same name embellished the city and adorned it with public buildings.[1] It was here that Herod brought to trial his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, for conspiring against him. They were probably innocent of the charge but Herod was a savage brute, suspicious of everybody. These sons were the offspring of his wife Mariamne, whom he had already murdered, and because of their mother were beloved by the Jews more than his other children. Hence the king's suspicious nature was aroused to jealousy and he de-

1 Josephus; Ant. XIX, 7, 5 and XX 9, 4.

termined to put them to death. As he held his throne by the favor of Augustus only, he did not dare to execute them without his consent. He, therefore, wrote to the emperor concerning them, asking his will in the matter. Augustus replied that he might bring them to trial before a proper court and suggested some place near Beirût, where the Roman governors in Syria might assemble for the purpose. He chose Beirût itself but did not bring his sons here. He quartered them at Platana, on the Damoor, and had them tried in their absence. Of course they were condemned, as he accused them most vehemently and in an indecent manner, making it clear that he wanted them condemned.[1] He would not

1. Ib. XVI, 11, 2.

allow the assessors to examine into the evidence, but on his own authority declared them guilty and asserted that he had full permission from the Emperor to do as he pleased with them. When the assessors saw that he was determined to have sentence passed against them, they confirmed his judgment but advised that they should not be put to death. This, however, was not to Herod's mind and he had them executed not long after.

Beirût became renowned, during the Roman period, for its great law school, perhaps the most famous in the empire, although there were others at Alexandria, Rome and Constantinople. It flourished from the time of Alexander Severus, A. D. 235, to the destruction of the city in 551.

The course of study occupied five years and the graduates were sure of finding business enough in the Roman empire, noted for its courts and scientific administration of law. It is said that the court of the praetorian prefect in the East could alone furnish employment for 150 advocates, among whom two, at a salary of sixty po inds of gold,[1] were chosen annually to defend the causes of the treasury. On account of the great opportunities offered to its graduates for advancement in the empire, this famous school was frequented by thousands of students. But Beirût offered advantages for culture outside the law school. Men distinguished in other walks of life such as Valerius Probus, the celebrated grammar-

1. Gibbon; Declime and Fall of Rom. Emp. ch. XVII.

ian in the days of Nero, lived here or obtained their education here. The distinguished jurist, Ulpian, who became the legal adviser of Alexander Severus, was probably educated here although his native place was Tyre. It is interesting to notice that Beirût, in being again the chief university town of Syria, has regained the distinction it enjoyed under the empire of Rome.

When Vespasian, while he was engaged in the Jewish War, A. D. 69, was proclaimed emperor by his troops at Caesarea, he came to Beirût on his way to Rome. Here he received the congratulations of the people, many embassies coming from Syria and other provinces, bringing with them crowns and declaring their loyalty to the new emperor.

Mucianus, the governor of Syria, also came and assured him of the joy of the inhabitants of the province at his elevation and declared that the people in every city had taken the oath of fidelity to him.[1]

Vespasian left his son Titus to finish the war. After the capture of Jerusalem, Titus made a progress through the land and exhibited shows at various places, notably at Caesarea in Palestine, in honor of his victory. He afterwards came to Beirût where he tarried for some time, and while here he celebrated his father's birthday with great pomp. The magnificence of the shows which he exhibited was probably the greatest that the city had ever witnessed. The amphitheater, built by Herod

1. Josephus, Jewish Wars, IV, 9, 6.

Agrippa, was thronged with the multitudes who gathered to gaze upon the destruction of the great number of Jewish captives who were slain, either fighting with wild beasts or with each other. He spent large sums in providing this entertainment for the people of Beirût and vicinity.[1]

1. Josephus, Jewish Wars, VII, 3, 1.



ANCIENT SHRINE AT HEAD OF ROMAN AQUEDUCT

VIII

THIS period was that of the extension of Christianity and it is quite possible that the gospel was preached here by some of the apostles in their journeys back and forth between Antioch and Jerusalem. There is a tradition that Christ himself visited Beirût when he came into the region of Sidon,[1] but the tradition cannot be relied upon. It is quite certain, however, that Christianity became established here in apostolic times and some of the believers in Christ from here suffered martyrdom in the days of persecution under Diocletian and Maximin, in the

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1. Mark, VII, 24.

early part of the fourth century. The most distinguished of these martyrs were Aphian and his brother Aedesius, sons of a wealthy family, who came to Beirût for study. Their parents were heathen but the young men came in contact with Christian teachers during their stay here and accepted the Christian faith. After finishing their studies, Aphian went home for a time but could not remain because of the opposition of his heathen parents. He, therefore, returned to Syria and went to Caesarea, in Palestine, where the persecution was especially severe. He joined the disciples there and witnessed their sufferings. One day, as the governor of the city was about to offer an idolatrous sacrifice, Aphian, without, taking counsel of any-

one, rushed up to him and laid hold of his arm, remonstrating with him for offering sacrifice to idols. The governor, in anger and astonishment as was natural, had him seized, terribly beaten and torn, and cast into prison for his temerity. Aphian endured all calmly and without complaining, having expected such treatment and being prepared for it. In prison he was tortured by having his feet put into the stocks and his legs stretched apart for a night and a day. He was then brought before the judge. The officers tried to force him by terrible tortures to renounce his faith. His sides were torn, the flesh being mangled to the very bones, and he received such a multitude of blows on his face and neck that they be-

came so swollen that his friends could scarcely recognize him. As he would not yield, his tormentors covered his feet with cloths soaked with oil and then set them on fire, which consumed the flesh to the very bones. His sufferings were intense but he remained unmoved through it all. Strange to say, he lived and was taken back to prison holding firm to his faith. Again he was brought before the judge and witnessed the same confession and then his tormentors, in despair, threw him into the sea. An earthquake, which seems to have followed immediately after, caused a tidal wave to cast the mangled body back upon the shore. He was honored as a distinguished martyr, although he was only one among many. His bro-

ther, unterrified by his fate, imitated him for, in Alexandria, where similar persecutions were going on, he attempted to prevent the judge, who was torturing the Christians, from executing his purpose. He, too, suffered martyrdom like Aphian.[1] Their story indicates that the university of Beirût had by that time come under strong Christian influence.

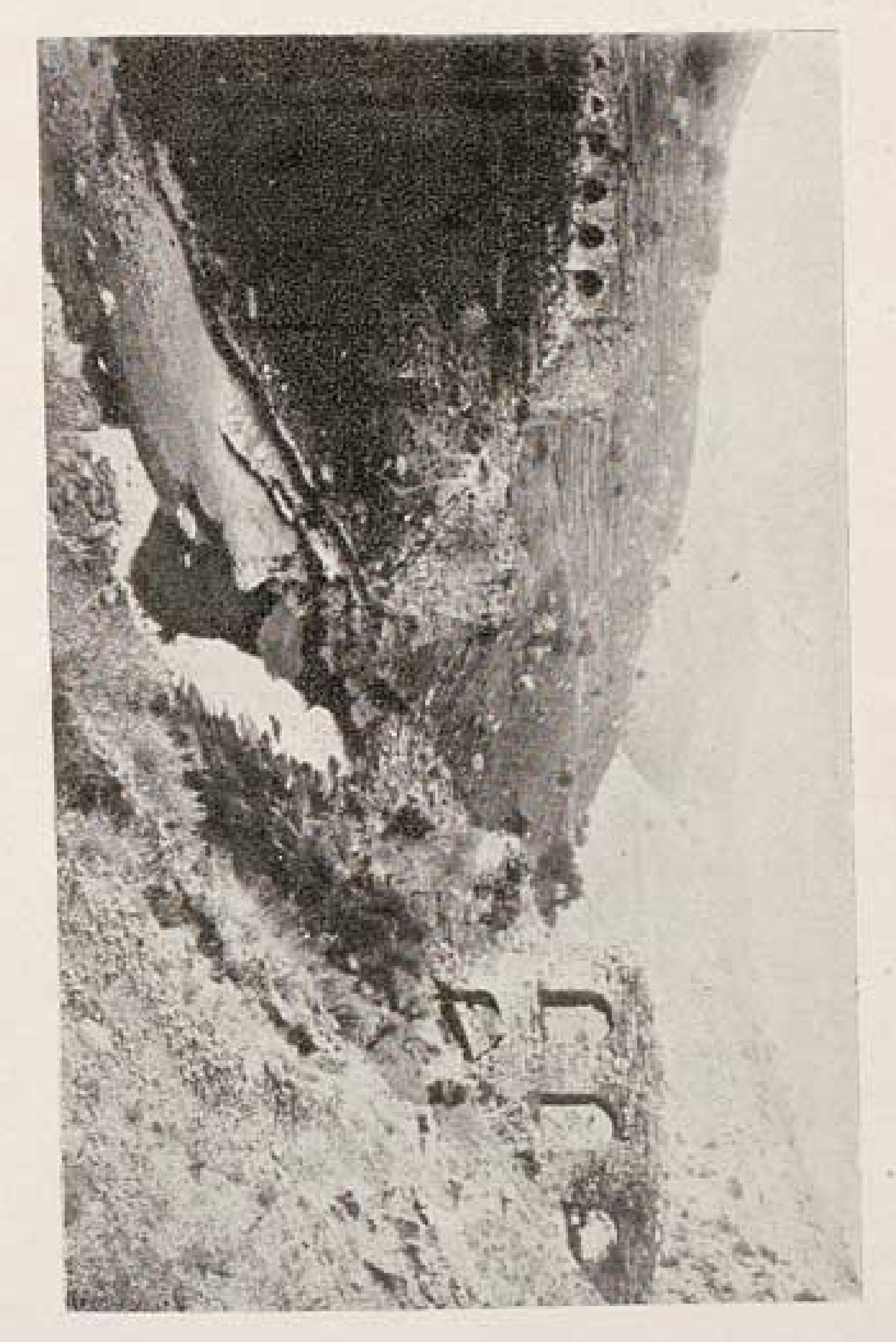
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1. **Eusebius; Martyrs of Palestine.**

IX

It must be at about this period that we are to connect with Beirût the story of St. George and the dragon. St. George is said to have been a soldier under Diocletian, who suffered martyrdom in the third century. But Diocletian did not begin to persecute the Christians until the beginning of the fourth century, the first edict being issued against them in 303 A.D. This shows that the story is probably apocryphal though its general acceptance in antiquity makes it worthy of mention. The site of his martyrdom is disputed, some placing it at Nicomedia, others at Lydd, in Palestine, and others at





REMAINS OF ROMAN AQUEDUCT ACROSS BEIRUT RIVER VALLEY

Beirût. As the story goes, a mighty monster infested the territory of Beirût and the inhabitants were obliged to sacrifice a young maiden annually lest he should destroy the place. One year, the lot falling upon the daughter of the governor, she was taken out to the accustomed place of sacrifice to be delivered to the monster. She prayed to God for deliverance and it came in the person of St. George who appeared just in the nick of time, slew the monster, and delivered the maiden to her father.[1] As a thank offering the governor built near the river a church which was dedicated to the saint and a feast was instituted in his honor

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1. This story of St. George is probably the old heathen legend of Perseus and Andromeda translated into Christian terms and revised to suit Christian ideas.

which used to be celebrated, during the middle ages, by both Christians and Moslems[1]. This is the origin of the name of the bay which lies to the east of the river, still called St. George's bay.

1. Ludolph von Suchem, who visited Beirût in 1350 A. D. refers to the story and adds that St George brought the people of the city and surrounding country to accept Christianity. (Pilg. Text Soc. Vol. XII).

X

In the year 349 A. D. Beirût was visited by an earthquake that destroyed a portion of the city and frightened those of the inhabitants who still clung to heathen ideas so that they abandoned heathenism. Although some of them afterwards went back to their earlier faith, Beirût was for the most part Christian from that date.

Other shocks were felt in 494 and 502, but they did little damage to Beirût although Sidon and Tyre were destroyed. The great calamity to Beirût, however, occurred in 551, as has been mentioned. That earthquake was felt all along the coast but no-

port you see. I am become one tomb. To some other place, free from sorrow, shalt thou urge with sounding oar thy advancing bark. Such was the will of Poseidon and the hospitable gods. Farewell, sea-faring men; farewell to you who fare on land.[1]"

1. Palatine Anthology; IX, 425-427.

PART TWO

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BEIRUT SINCE THE MOSLEM CONQUEST

where so severely as here. The tidal wave that followed was perhaps more destructive than the shaking of the earth. It is said that the sea receded for the distance of a mile and then returned with such force upon the land that it swept all before it, sinking the ships in the harbor or dashing them on the shore and engulfing thousands of the inhabitants. The buildings were all destroyed and the survivors among the inhabitants left the place in fear and despair. The professors of the university and the merchants went to Sidon until the city should be restored. The reconstruction was going slowly forward, when a fire swept away most of the new buildings, thus giving the finishing blow to the city. The law school was given up and the population

dwindled so that the place remained small and unimportant for centuries.

This calamity was celebrated by Greek poets, one of them, Joannes Barbucallus, being a contemporary of the event. He represents the city as saying: -

"Here am I, the unhappy city, lying in ruins, my citizens dead men, alas! most ill-fated of all! The fire god destroyed me after the shock of the Earth-shaker (Poseidon). Ah me! From so much loveliness I am become ashes. Yet do ye who pass me by bewail my fate, and shed a tear is honor of Berytus that is no more" "Where is Aphrodite, guardian of the city, that she may look upon the shelterless haunt of the dead, once the abode of the Graces? A tomb of tombless men is the city, under whose ashes we lie, Beroë's many thousands. Inscribe upon a single stone above us, dear mortals] who survive: 'Here lies Berytus, lamented city, buried above ground'."

"Sailor, stay not thy vessel's course for me, nor lower thy sails: dry land is the



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6. Reverse. Temple with four columns with the figure of Astarte inside holding a staff in her right hand which is surmounted by a cross, a small figure on either side and on the right a figure of victory on a column crowning Astarte with a wreath. On the center of the gable Poseidon seizing the nymph Beroë and on either corner a winged victory. Legend as on number 3. Reign of Elagabalus.

7. Reverse. Poseidon standing with trident in his right hand, to his left victory on a column holding a wreath. Legend as on number 3. Reign of Gallienus.

XI

WHEN Islam swept over Syria in the early part of the 7th century, Beirût was not a large town as it had never recovered wholly from the shock of the earthquake in the previous century. Consequently it is rarely noticed by the writers of the West, and were it not for the recent discovery by one of the Jesuit fathers of an Arabic manuscript, in Paris, published in the Meshriq (Vols. I & II) we should have very few materials for tracing the history of the city in the Middle Ages. The author of this history was a certain Ṣâliḥ bin Yaḥya who traces his descent from the "Princes of the West", a ne of chieftains who, like feudal

lords, ruled over the regions of Lebanon adjacent to Beirût. The city itself was at times under their control though their center was 'Aramûn in the Lebanon. The author lived, as it appears, in the 15th century and his notices of Beirût for the period from the conquest to his own day are rather scanty but serve to fill a gap that would be almost barren without them. Much of what follows has been derived from this source.

After the Moslems had captured Damascus, in 635 A.D., Yezîd was appointed governor of Syria and proceeded to subdue the adjacent regions. Beirût seems to have come under his control and is mentioned as paying tribute to the Caliph in 638 A.D. The Moslems began to settle here and gradually supplanted the Christian population until the city

became chiefly Moslem.

Ṣâliḥ bin Yaḥya mentions some of the residents of Beirût in this period who became distinguished, among them al-Auzâ'i whose personal name was 'Abd-ur-Raḥmân bin-'Omar. He was regarded as the Imam of Syr ia and the great savant of his day. He was learned in Islamic theology and law and his doctrine was held as authoritative in Syria for 200 years. The Arabs of Spain are said to have followed his opinion also. Ṣâliḥ bin Yaḥya declares that his reputation was so great in Syria that his authority was superior to that of the Caliph. It was specially acknowledged in matters of tradition. He is said to have been born in Baalbek in 707 or 712 A.D. (A.H. 90 or 95), but he afterwards removed to Beirût where he became distinguished. He

died in A. D. 774 (A H. 157) and was buried in a village called Khuntûs.[1] He was a devotee in his religion and his sainthood is quite probably commemorated by the old Moslem mazâr on the coast south of Beirût, near Bir Hasan, which is still venerated, though it is uncertain whether this is the place referred to as Khuntûs. His son followed in his footsteps as a religious devotee but no literary works are ascribed to him as are attributed to his father.

1. Abu-l-Fida, under year 157. At-Tabari mentions him, in the appendix to his history, among those dying in A. H. 156.

XII

BEIRUT became the port of Damascus in the time of the Ommiad Caliphs and has so remained ever since. It was highly esteemed by the Ommiads and one of them, Walid I, who reigned from A. D. 705 to 715, is said to have written some verses in praise of Beirût. A fleet was established here which used to issue forth to plunder Cyprus and the islands of the Archipelago. In the year 1015 al-Ḥâkim bi-amr-illâh, the Fatimite Sultan of Egypt, who also ruled this coast, bestowed Beirût, together with Tyre and Sidon, upon a certain al-Fath who is stated to have derived from these cities a revenue of 300,000

dinars. Al-Ḥâkim was the head of the sect of the Druses and was regarded by them as an incarnation of the deity. His followers were persecuted and driven from Egypt, many coming to this country and settling in the Lebanon. Here they had connection with Beirût as we shall have occasion to notice. During the rule of the Fatimite dynasty in Eygpt from A.D. 909 to 1172, Beirût seems to have been subject to them for the most part. This situation continued until the period of the Crusades, when it fell into the hands of the Seljukian Turks with the rest of Syria.

It was the bad treatment the pilgrims from the West received at the hands of these Turks that was the exciting cause of the Crusades. This series of expeditions from Europe

continued, at intervals, for 200 years, during which the land and especially the coast towns, resounded with the din of war. The first Crusade passed by Beirût, pursuing its way to Jerusalem, and did not delay to reduce the city, nor any of the chief towns on the coast, although the Crusaders had taken Antioch and Tripoli. It was a comparatively small force that the people of Beirût witnessed passing its walls, since the immense host of some 300,000 men, who had set out from Europe in 1036-7, had dwindled to 20,000 before it reached this city. They were, however, the flower of the European chivalry and performed prodigies of valor in their subsequent conflicts. Jerusalem fell in 1099 and the Crusaders then set about subduing the rest of the country. Beirût did not fall into their

hands until 1110, according to Ṣâliḥ bin Yaḥya, who says that it was taken by assault after a desperate defense and that the captors inflicted great suffering upon the inhabitants, slaying many and dragging others into captivity. This may well be believed for it was the custom of war in those days.

William of Tyre, in his history of the Crusades[1] gives an account of the siege with some detail He says that Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, called to his aid Bertram, count of Tripoli and beleaguered the city by sea and land, collecting galleys from the coast towns in his possession. From the pine forests in the neighborhood, which seem to have been abundant then as now, he secured timber for

1. Bk. XI, Ch. 13,

the construction of ladders, bridges, catapults and other machines for carrying on the siege, besides huge towers from which to attack the defenders on the walls. The work was pressed forward with all vigor. The besieged were given no rest by day or by night for two months until they were quite worn out with the fatigue of constantly defending the walls. At last some soldiers leaped from one of the towers upon a part of the wall while the rest of the army was making attacks in various other quarters and keeping the defenders fully occupied, and others at the same time planted their ladders and reached the top of the wall in that way. From thence they leaped down and opened one of the gates, thus letting in their comrades. When the besieged saw the enemy within the gate they fled

toward the port, hoping to escape by the galleys there anchored, but the fleet of the blockading squadron was on the alert and drove them back. They were thus caught between two fires, as it were, and were cut down. A fearful carnage ensued and few would have escaped the sword had not the king interfered and put an end to the slaughter. According to the account of William of Tyre this occurred on April 17th 1111, but he states in the beginning that the siege took place in 1110, which corresponds to the date given by Saliḥ bin Yaḥya and is probably the correct one.

XIII

Beirut remained in the hands of the Crusaders until 1187 during which period many minor conflicts took place in the vicinity between them and the Moslems who still held Damascus and the Labanon. Buhtur, the chief from whom the princes of the West, above mentioned, were descended, carried on a war with the Crusaders from his station in 'Aramûn. He gained a decisive victory over the Franks at the Ghadîr in 1151, winning distinction for his valor and success. He died in 1157, but his descendants continued to hold their possessions in the mountain. When Saladin came to the throne of

Egypt and Syria, the Crusaders found in him a foeman worthy of their steel. He was the hero of the Crusades on the Moslem side as Richard of the Lion Heart was on the side of the Christians. He does not yield to the latter in chivalry or warlike ability and is even superior to him in fidelity to his treaty obligations. He gained victory after victory over the Christians and gradually forced them out of their possessions ni Palestine and Syria. In the year 1183 he attacked Beirût. He had secured a fleet from Egypt and assembled an army in the Buḳa‘ and stationed sentinels on the summits of Lebanon to notify him as soon as the ships should appear. But the Franks also collected ships from Acre and Tyre to ward off the attack by sea. Saladin came over the mountain with his

army and assaulted the city on all sides with such force and persistence for three days that the defenders were scarcely able to eat. Stones and darts were rained upon the walls and town so fiercely and unremittingly that the besieged scarcely dared to show themselves, but they returned the fire as best they could and inflicted greater loss upon the enemy. Saladin tried to mine the walls but the besieged countermined and thus thwarted his projects. The fleet also came to the aid of the city and Saladin, being apprized of the approach of a relieving army of the Franks, abandoned the siege.[1]

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1. William of Tyre, Bk. XXII, Ch. 17-18; siege also noticed by Abu-l-Fida under the year A. H. 578, but without particulars.

XIV

After Saladin's great victory at Hattîn in 1187, Palestine and the coast line fell into his hands with the exception of the city of Tyre which he attacked but failed to take. Sidon opened its gates without resistance but Beirût refused to surrender and underwent another siege at his hands. Ṣâliḥ bin Yaḥya says that Saladin encamped upon the heights above the town and that the siege lasted eight days. Then the Franks asked for terms and were granted the privilege of taking refuge in Tyre. Saladin appointed a governor over Beirût and then departed to encounter the hosts of the third Crusade which

were bearing down upon Acre. While engaged there he heard of the approach of Frederick Barbarossa from the north with an army of Germans, and fearing that some of his recent conquests would fall into their hands he ordered the walls of Sidon and Jebail to be razed and their inhabitants transfered to Beirût. It would seem from this that he regarded this city as the strongest and most important of the three, and it seems to have assumed a leading position in the third Crusade. It was made the capital of the district which extended from south of Sidon to the limits of the territory of Tripoli then still in the hands of the Franks. The host of the Germans faded away before it reached Acre, Frederick having been drowned in Cilicia, and Beirût saw but a small

remnant pass its gates, so few that they were quite unable to make any attack. At the close of the war with Richard, Saladin visited Beirût again and held court here for some days, during which he was visited by Bohemond III, prince of Antioch, with whom he made a treaty. This was the last time that Saladin honored Beirût with his presence. He went from here to Damascus where he soon after died.

After his death the government fell into disorder and the Franks began to recover some of the places he had taken from them. Sidon was occupied and then they advanced on Beirût. The governor was a certain 'Isâma, a coward, it would seem, for he ran away before the Franks appeared, greatly to the chagrin of the inhabitants who reproached him

roundly for his conduct. Some time after, when the Franks were besieging the castle of Tibnîn, south-east of Tyre, someone is said to have urged the commander to deliver it up to the Franks as 'Isâma did at Beirût, and the following satirical verse was composed a propos to the matter.[1] —

> "Give up the castle, 'twill not injure your fame,
> For he who seeks peace is not worthy of blame;
> The surrender of castles, without war or dispute,
> Is the law of 'Isâma, made at Beirût."[1]

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1. The Arabic is as follows : —

سلّم الحصنَ ما عليك ملامه
لا يُلامُ الذي يرومُ السلامه
فعطاء الحصون من غير حربٍ
سنّةٌ سنّها ببيروت اسامه

The Moslems remained in possession of Beirût for ten years. It was retaken, however, by the Franks in A. D. 1197 and held by them for ninty-five years, longer than any other city in Syria, though it was not independent all this time.

XV

THE Mamlukes, who usurped the throne of Egypt in 1250 A. D., gradually extended their authority over Syria. The Sultan Bebers of this dynasty, who reigned from 1260 to 1277 A. D., took most of the towns on the coast. His successor, Kelaoun, captured Tripoli and destroyed it, but made a treaty with Beirût and Jebail, in which these cities acknowledged his authority while the Franks still remained in possession. In 1291 the city of Acre revolted and was besieged and taken by Sultan al-Melik al-Ashraf who slew the inhabitants. This so terrified the other towns which were implicated, that the inhabitants fled. Beirût, however, saved

itself by making submission while the siege was going on, thus hoping to escape. But the Sultan sent his lieutenant, Sanjar, to take possession, after Tyre had been subdued. He was received by the governor with the usual display, the latter going forth to meet him with a retinue of horsemen gaily attired, performing their various evolutions, displaying their skill in horsemanship. When Sanjar had entered the castle, he ordered the inhabitants to appear before him, men, women and children, with their movables. This was done, the people supposing it to be a measure for protection from the insolence of the soldiery. But when they were assembled within the castle, he commanded the men to be seized and thrown into the moat where they perished. The old men and women and

children were spared and sent as prisoners to Damascus and from thence were marched to Egypt, many perishing on the way. Those who survived were allowed to return to Beirût or to go to Cyprus. The fortifications were destroyed by Sanjar lest the Franks should attempt to retake the city by sea and thus establish themselves once more on the coast.

The danger from the Franks was not imaginary, for in 1299 an expedition consisting of many ships, some thirty of them so large that they carried 700 men apiece, arrived off the port and attempted a landing, but a fearful gale arose that shattered some of the ships and the rest abandoned the undertaking.

XVI

In the year 1047 A. D. a traveller from Persia, Abu Mu'in Nasir bin Khusrau by name, passed through Beirût and describes a magnificent arch spanning the roadway, probably the road towards the river, as he entered the city from that direction. He says that it was fifty ells is height (some 80 or 90 ft.), the side walls of which were of immense blocks of white stone each of which he estimated weighed a ton and a half. On the top were marble columns 14 or 15 ft. in height and so large that two men could scarcely embrace them with outstretched arms, which would indicate a diameter of three feet or more, Above these was an arcade on either side and the great

central arch towered above the arcade some fifty cubits (75 to 80 ft.). The stones of this arch were 8 cubits broad and estimated to weigh 10 tons each, all beautifully carved. This arch probably belonged to some one of the magnificent buildings constructed by Herod Agrippa, as before mentioned, and may have belonged to a theater or a bath. Abu Mu'in saw no other remarkable buildings standing but the surrounding plain was covered with columns and capitals of marble and granite.[1]

The harbor of Beirût was well fortified during the period when it was occupied by the Crusaders. Johannes Phocas, who visited the place about 1185, shortly before it was captured by Saladin, describes the port as an artificial one, constructed in the

1. Pil. Text, Vol. IV.

form of a crescent with a great tower at the extremity of each horn and having a chain that could be drawn across the entrance.[1] That harbor was probably maintained as long as the Franks held possession but after they were driven out the port was neglected.

When John Poloner visited the place in 1421 he described the harbor as abominable.[2] It was the policy of the Mamluke sultans to keep Beirût unfortified, it would seem, lest the Franks should seize it and make it a stronghold for their marauding expeditions on this coast. Al-Melik id-Dhahir, however, built a castle, which was garrisoned by the Princes of the West after the Franks were finally expelled. Beirût was in constant

1. Pil. Text, Vol. V.
2. Pil. Text, Vol. VI.

danger of raids by the Franks of Cyprus, mostly Genoese. We have mentioned that of 1299, and again in 1305 a fleet passed here on its way to Sidon, which place was plundered, but Beirût was not attacked, probably because it was found well garrisoned. In 1303 the Franks had raided the region of the Damûr and captured one of the family of the Aramûn princes, besides killing some of his attendants. The prince was ransomed for 3000 dinars. In 1333 the Genoese attacked Beirût with the object of capturing a large ship lying in the port, belonging to the Catalans, who were hostile to them and in alliance with the Moslems. The fight lasted two days with considerable loss on both sides, but the Genoese succeeded in capturing the ship.

intended is uncertain) and thereupon it poured forth blood and water. It is related that a drop of this blood would heal those who were sick. John Poloner states that it was kept in an underground chamber. The image or picture was afterwards carried to Rome.

Beirût was frequently visited by pilgrims to the Holy Land since it was a commercial center and one could usually get passage from here to different ports on the Mediterranean.

XVIII

The Franks of Cyprus captured Alexandria in 1365, and the sultan of Egypt ordered a large fleet to be built at Beirût for the invasion of the island. It made the town a very busy place for a time, but the project was abandoned by the succeeding sultan because he probably realized that his people were no match for the Franks at sea. In 1381 a Genoese fleet appeared at Sidon which they plundered. This was at once reported to Damascus and a force was forthwith despatched to Beirût to ward off any attack that might be made upon it. The apprehension of such an at

XVII

Bertraudon de la Brocquière, writing about 1432 A. D., states that the port of Beirût was still handsome, deep and safe for vessels. On one of its points were to be seen the remains of a castle which was formerly strong but was then in ruins. He also mentions the celebration of a feast which he witnessed. Groups of the inhabitants were singing and shouting, the cannons of the castle were fired and the people of the town launched into the air, very high and to a great distance, a kind of fire larger than the greatest lantern. He was told that they sometimes made use of these at sea to set fire to an enemy's vessel. He was curious to find the

composition of this fire, which he finally did, but after some trouble and by bribing the manufacturer. He does not tell, however, what the ingredients were. One wonders whether it might not have been something corresponding to the famous Greek fire. This manner of celebrating a feast reminds us of the fondness of the people of Beirût to-day for rockets in the celebration of feasts.

In the Guide Book,[1] written about 1350, Beirût is described as a wealthy city. It was noted for possessing a wonderful image, or rather picture, of Christ, which Fetellus[2] says was painted by Nicodemus, and which was pierced by the infidels (whether Jews or Moslems are

1. Pil. Text, Vol. V.
2. Ludolph von Suchem, about 1350 (Pil. Text, Vol. XII).

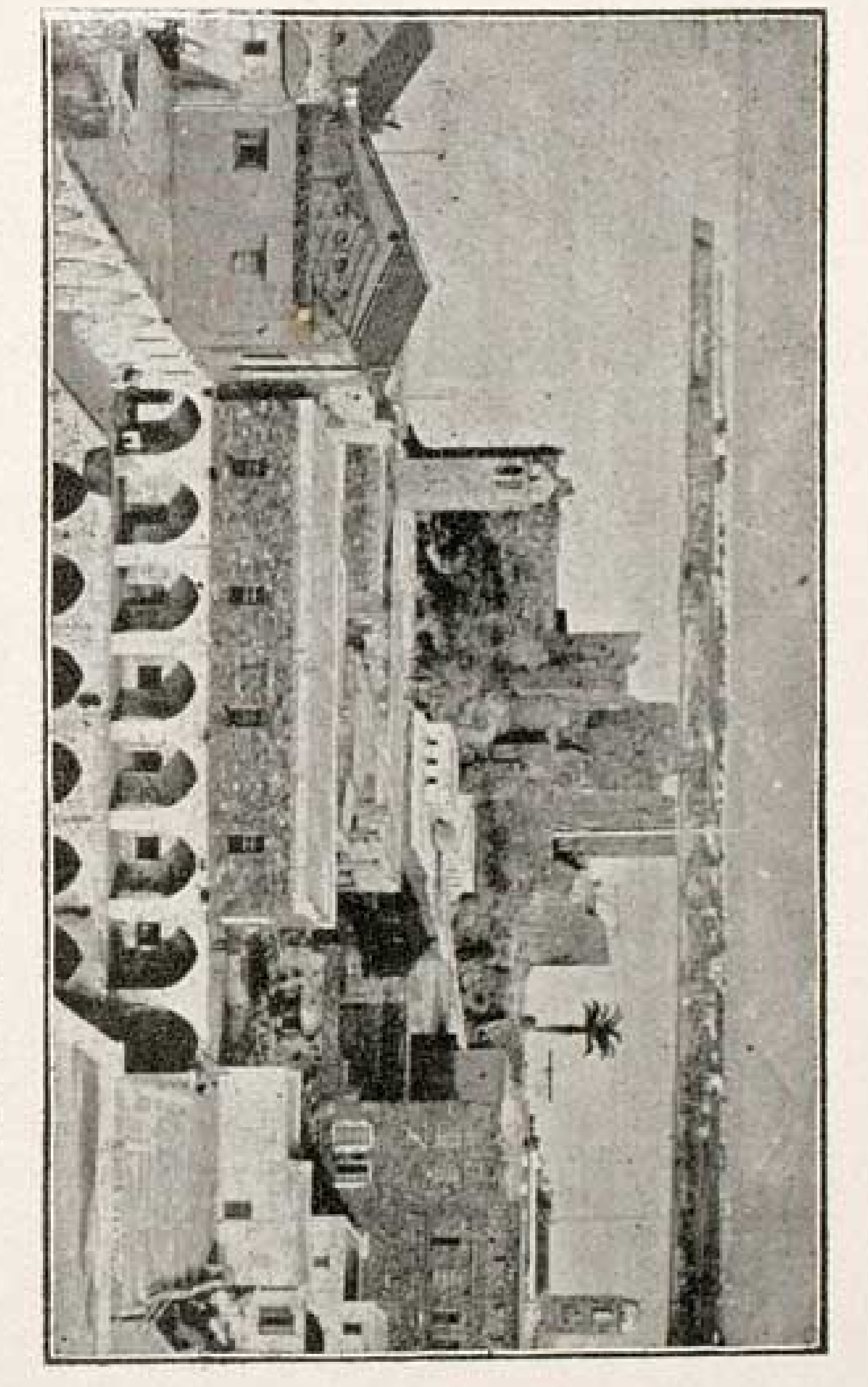
tack was well founded for the fleet appeared off the harbor but retired when they found the city well defended. This movement, however, was only a feint, for when the troops had returned to Damascus the Franks came back and made a vigorous attempt on the town. There was only a small fort to defend the place and the garrison was plied with stones and fire darts from the ships so vigorously that the defenders were obliged to retire behind the walls. The Franks then landed and attacked the city but the Moslems rallied and made such a vigorous onset that the enemy was forced back to his ships with great loss. Among the foremost of the defenders was the father of Salih, the author of the history above mentioned, from whom he probably obtained an account of

the affair. Notice of the approach of this fleet was telegraphed to Damascus at night by bonfires and a troop of horse arrived at Beirût by the evening of the following day but too late to take part in the defence. It seems that a regular service of bonfires by night and carrier pigeons by day was maintained between the two cities for use in such emergencies. The loss of the Franks was so great in this encounter that they did not trouble Beirût again for more than twenty years. In 1404 however, another Genoese fleet appeared and, the inhabitants being unprepared, took their belongings and fled from the city to safe places in the mountain. There was no one to defend the place except the Princes of the West and a few of their followers. The enemy landed at some point

west of the town, called Sanbatiyeh[1] and plundered it and burned a market near the port, The Moslems mustered in the vicinity and watched for an opportunity to cut off any stragglers that might get separated from the main body. The Genoese plundered until the middle of the afternoon and then returned to their ships and sailed for Sidon.

It would seem that the Franks gave up their hostile descents upon Beirût after this attack and opened up commercial relations which they found more profitable. At first they sent only a couple of ships at a time from Cyprus, with goods derived from Venice, but when trade became

1. Perhaps the quarter to the west of the port, now known as *As-Samtiyeh* (الصمطيه)



OLD SEA-CASTLE NEAR SITE OF PRESENT PORT

common a colony of Cypriotes, or Venetians, were allowed to establish themselves at Beirût where they possessed stores and churches. The trade became so considerable that the revenues from it were of sufficient importance to require a regular customs service, the surplus revenue being transmitted to Damascus. The city rose to new importance; it was once more fortified and a wall was built along the sea front.

XIX

Beirût remained in the hands of the Mamlukes of Egypt until the reign of the Ottoman sultan, Selim I, under whom they were expelled and Egypt itself was taken. Syria from that time became a province of the Ottoman Empire and has so remained. We have some account of it in the writings of Henry Maundrell, who passed through here in 1697, at Easter, and spent a day in the city. He speaks of the fine situation and the supply of water from springs flowing down from adjacent hills, which water was dispersed all over the city in convenient fountains. He describes the residence of the emir Fakhr-ed-Dîn, prince of the Druses, who had

extended his authority in the days of sultan Murad (probably the fourth of that name) so that he ruled over the coast line from Beirût to Acre, and seems to have established his chief residence at Beirût. This prince was afterwards forced by the sultan's government back into the mountains. His palace is described at some length. It was situated in the north-eastern part of the city. The building, at the entrance of which was a marble fountain of great beauty, consisted of several courts, at that time much ruined, or perhaps never completed. There were stables, yards for horses, dens for lions and other wild animals, gardens, etc. which, in their design, would not have been unworthy of any prince in Christendom. He makes special mention of the orange garden which was a large quadrangle, di-

vided into sixteen lesser squares, four in a row, with walks between. These walks were bordered by orange trees of large size and perfect shape which, at the time when he saw them, were loaded with golden fruit, presenting a most charming sight to a European. The squares were borderedwith stone in which channels were cut for conveying water to all parts of the garden. If the garden had been well kept he thought nothing could have been more delightful. It was then put to no better use than as a fold for sheep and goats so that in many places the visitors were up to their knees in dirt. On the east side of the garden were two terrace-walks, one above the other, each having an approach of twelve steps, and bordered by fine spreading orange trees placed at intervals to furnish suita-

ble shade. On the north were booths, summer houses, and other apartments which were very delightful in summer time. Maundrell attributes the excellence of design manifested in this palace garden to the fact that Fakhr-ed-Dîn had been in Italy and there had seen similar gardens which had suggested to him the idea, so much in advance of what the traveller saw elsewhere in Turkey. He inferred that Fakhr-ed-Dîn must have been much superior to his contemporaries in culture and genius and without their prejudices in regard to statuary, for he saw in one of the gardens pedestals designed for statues, indicating that he was not a very zealous Mohammedan. At one corner of the garden was a watch-tower sixty feet high, and designed to be carried much higher.

From this tower a view of the whole city was obtained.

Maundrell mentions the existence of an old church consecrated to St. John, but which had been occupied by the Moslems as a mosque, and another, much inferior, still in the hands of the Greeks. He found it adorned with pictures, one of which bore the name of Quartus, the First, archbishop of Beirût. He saw another picture of some saint with a very large beard, reaching to his feet, and the following story was told him concerning the saint. He was a person of most eminent virtue in his day, but to his great misfortune he did not possess a beard. He became very melancholy at this defect, and the devil, taking advantage of his despondency, tempted him by promising to give him the desired

adornment if he would comply with a suggestion the devil made to him. But the saint, though extremely desirous of obtaining a beard, would not purchase it by such means, and rejected the proposition with indignation, declaring that he would go without a beard forever rather than obtain it on such terms; and at the same time, taking hold of the downy tuft on his chin, with which nature had grudgingly supplied him, as though to swear by it, he found to his astonishment that the hair immediately began to stretch as he pulled it. Finding it so pliable he continued to pull until, lo! the hair reached his feet.

At the east end of Beirût Maundrell saw seven or eight beautiful pillars of granite, three feet in diameter. He speaks of the city wall as

still entire on the south side and of certain inscriptions in both Greek and Latin which are well known at the present day. He saw may evidences of the city's ancient magnificence in the pillars and marbles and fragments of statues scattered about, some of them in rubbish heaps, with other relics, which must have been very abundant in those days.

XX

Beirût evidently declined during the 18th century or, at least, failed to make progress. We find it mentioned as a small town of about 5000 inhabitants only, in the early part of the 19th century the houses being very poor, built of mud and sandstone, the streets narrow and filthy and the port choked with sand.[1] When Mohammed Ali Pasha, of Egypt, revolted and occupied Syria in 1832, Beirût, of course, fell into the hands of the Egyptians and so continued until they were finally driven out by the English, in alliance with the sultan of Turkey. In this contest

1. Miss. Herald, 1824.

Beirût was bombarded by the English fleet in Sept. 1841 and the siege lasted until the 10th of Oct. when the Egyptian troops evacuated the town. The castle was ruined and the houses suffered much damage.[1] Many cannon balls, relics of this bombardment, have been found about the town and are still occasionally picked up. Since that date the city has grown much until it has become something like what it was in former times, the chief sea port and the university town of Syria.

1. ibid 1841.

XXI

THE massacres in Lebanon, which occurred in the spring and summer of 1860, produced important consequences for Beirût. The outbreak began in the latter part of the month of May and continued until the month of August, when the arrival of the French troops put an end to it. The villages on the Lebanon to the south of Beirût were sacked and burned, the men killed and most of the male children. All the region was thrown into a panic and thousands of refugees, largly women and children, fled to Beirût for safety. As the insurrection spread to the inter-

ior more fugitives escaped to the city until many thousands were sheltered here. There was fear of a massacre in Beirût also and two incipient movements began, but the presence of foreign warships in the harbor prevented bloodshed. The French troops began to arrive on the 16th. of August and all further danger of massacre was over. But the presence of so many refugees, utterly destitute, and without hope of being restored to their homes for months, and even if restored, unable to support themselves or find shelter in their ruined houses, laid upon the people of Beirût a heavy burden. Money was sent from Europe and America to furnish food and clothing during the winter of 1860-61, as it was impossible for the refugees to be re-established in their homes before the

Spring of the latter year. The American missionaries cared for some 6000 people and the Protestant community for some 2500 more and the other sects did likewise. It was estimated that 100,000 perished in the massacres, mostly men, and that 15,000 widows, with their children, were to be found in Beirût alone. Many remained here permanently and, as a result, the city grew rapidly after the opening of the French road to Damascus in 1863 with a regular transportation service. The population was estimated by Volney, in 1782, at 6,000 only, and as late as 1848 it was not more than 15,000, but from 1860 onward it has grown apace, especially since the opening of the railway to Damascus and the Hauran and to Aleppo, and the building of the port. The population in

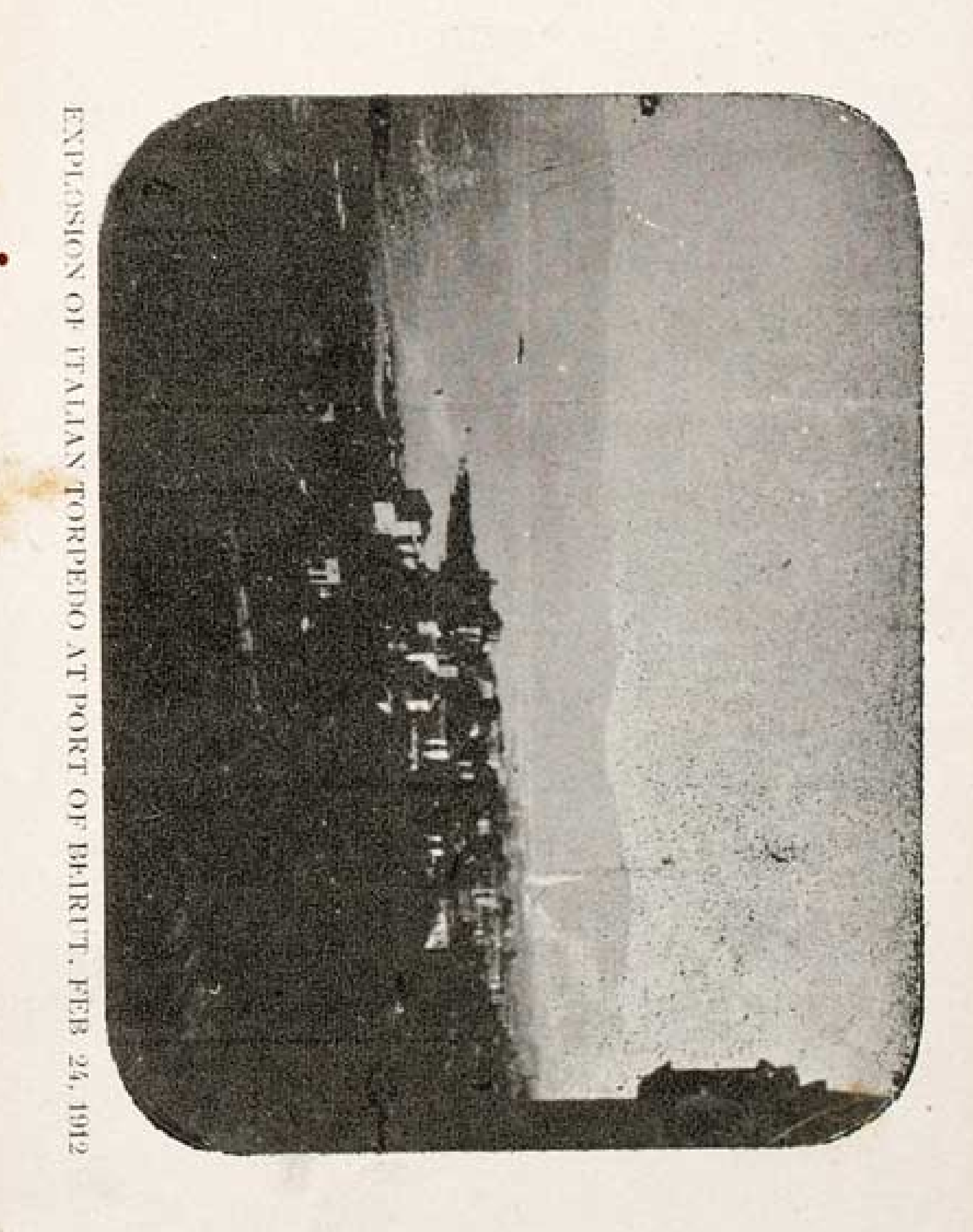
1896 was estimated at 120,000 and now is considerably larger.

In 1888 the Vilayet of Beirût was established, separating it from that of Damascus, and Beirût became the capital of the provence which has naturally added to its importance. The growth of its educational institutions during the last decade has also been very marked and has, in this respect, made it a center of culture for the nearer East.

XXII

On Sept. 30th, 1911, Italy declared war against Turkey and military operations commenced by an attack upon Tripoli in Africa. This province was at such a distance from Beirût that no great apprehension was felt here that the war would be extended to the Syrian coast. As months passed without any hostile demonstrations in the eastern Mediterranean people became more confident of immunity and business went on as usual. But on the 24th. of Feb., 1912, two Italian cruisers appeared off the harbor, taking everybody by surprise, as no intimation of their coming had been received. At seven o'clock in the morning the Italian admiral

sent a message to the governor-general that the two Turkish vessels in the port, a gunboat and a torpedo boat, must be surrendered by nine o'clock or he would attack them. As the cruisers lay some considerable distance out, the message did not reach the governor-general until about twenty minutes before the hour fixed and no reply was returned. At a few minutes past nine the Italians opened fire with the result that the gunboat was soon in flames and the torpedo boat somewhat disabled. At twenty minutes past nine the enemy ceased firing and one of the cruisers moved up to the entrance to the port. There it discharged two torpedos at the gunboat which was struck, the explosions sending a shaft of water high into the air and completely wrecking the ill-fated vessel.



EXPLOSION OF ITALIAN TORPEDO AT PORT OF BEIRUT, FEB 24, 1912

The torpedo boat was damaged but still afloat. The cruisers then drew off towards the north; it was hoped that the action was finished and people began to breath more freely. But after a time the enemy were seen returning and speculation was rife as to what their purpose was. Many thought they were preparing to bombard the city and consternation was general. It soon became evident that they were not satisfied with their morning's work at the port, as the torpedo boat had not sunk and had, in fact, moved to another part of the harbor, near the Ottoman Bank building. One of the cruisers approached and discharged three volleys of shells at close range which completely wrecked the torpedo boat. One of the shells struck the Bank building, doing

considerable damage. The cruisers then moved slowly away to the northwest but did not entirely disappear until after sunset.

The action, besides destroying the boats, had caused serious damage to the Custom House and other buildings in the vicinity of the port and, what was more to be lamented, had killed and wounded many civilians as well as marines. Of the latter some 55 were missing and of the civilians over 50 were killed or died of their wounds. Altogether the effect upon the city was serious. The inhabitants were wholly inexperienced in modern warfare and had little conception of the destructive effect of explosive shells and torpedos so that many drew too near the port during the action and suffered in consequence. This struck

terror into the minds of the multitude and the consternation was general. A mob broke into the barracks and armed themselves with the guns there stored and another mob threatened to break into the prison and release the prisoners. The energetic action of the governor-general prevented this and all further outbreaks. Martial law was declared and quiet was restored as far as the external aspect of affairs was concerned. But the terror of the people continued and many fled from the city while many others took refuge in the consulates and institutions under foreign protection for fear that the town would be bombarded, especially when the enemy were seen returning. It was not strange that such apprehension should have existed as several shells

had been thrown over the city to the sands on the south during the previous action. The disappearance of the cruisers did not allay the fears of the population and for days they continued to leave the city while rumors were rife for days, and even weeks, that the Italians would return. Business was greatly disturbed and much loss incurred in consequence. It was the most serious affair Beirùt has experienced since the bombardment by the English before referred to.